



The Voter The Voter

Inside this Issue	Page #
Calendar	2
Petition Drive	2
Message from President	2
Musing from the Editor	2

A Report from Council



By Leona Hassing

On the weekend of May 30-June 1, forty statewide League leaders (State President, board members, local presidents and/or a representative) attended Council in Yakima.

Traditionally Council is held in Ellensburg at CWU, but due to renovations on campus, it was held in Yakima.

Saturday's session started with a Welcome to Council 2008 from Barbara Seitle, State League President. Each unit shared with the group a short summary of activities during the year.

Presentations, for the day, included Parliamentary Procedure by Judy Golberg, League 101 by Barbara Seitle, and an open discussion, lead by board member, Barbara Bush, responding to the questionnaire sent out earlier to solicit input.

At the evening banquet we heard from a panel discussing "Immigration with an Emphasis on Eastern Washington Issues" presented by a lawyer, a medical services advocate and a young lady, American born, who spoke about her experience of having an undocumented husband, the time frames, costs, and hardships to obtain legal papers.

On Sunday, a short business meeting was held, at which time we adopted two new positions.

FERRY POSITION: The LWVWA believe that: Ferries in Washington State are part of the highway system and should be funded as such. Passenger-Only ferries should be funded as are other

modes of public transportation. The fare box should not be expected to totally fund ferry operations in Washington State. **ELECTION METHODS:** The LWVWA believes that the Voter Registration State Base (VRSD) should not be used to deny people the right to vote. No proof of citizenship other than the sworn signature of the registration form should be required for Voter Registration. There should be random audits of all ballots, with the percentage of ballots audited to be determined by a statistician. The mail-in post mark deadline should be Election Day.

The day concluded with a group discussion about State-wide Committees. The board will use the input for follow-up consideration.

Member Spotlight : President Ginger Vetrano



Ginger Vetrano has been a League member off and on for 40 years. She joined the League because it focused on issues, not candidates or parties and because it is a voice of reason and balance as opposed to one of emotional responses to issues. She believes in informed, registered voters and transparent government.

During her time in the League, Ginger has served on the Board on several occasions. Recently, she was involved with the County Seat issue and headed the Observer Corps.

Ginger has been married to her husband Jim for 55 years. They have four children. Ginger reports that they are all doing fine.

In 1973 Ginger became a nurse practitioner. She worked for the local Planned Parenthood for 28 years, including 13 as Executive Director.

Ginger wrote, "When I retired, I decided to divide my life into activities that would accomplish my objectives of fun and service. Besides making time for my husband and kids, I joined Kiwanis, a service organization that has provided me with sev-

eral opportunities for local service. Kiwanis and League are my community activities. For



me, I work out five days a week with aerobics and weight lifting,

and I also dance-square dance, round dance, ball room dance, and Seasoned Steppers, a cabaret style dance group for women over 50."

LWV of Benton Franklin County

Working for a Better Future

A Message from our President

First of all, thank you for electing me your president for the next two years. It is an honor I appreciate, and I will do my best to fulfill all, or most, of your expectations.

Several of us have met with a coalition convened by the *Tri-City Herald* to plan a debate for candidates for the legislature from the 8th and 16th districts and those running for Benton County Commissioner positions. The debate will take place on July 22nd at the Charter studio on Kellogg St. in Kennewick. PLEASE-the candidates want to know what questions we will be asking, so let Kay Ottem know your concerns. She would like to get that information to them as soon as possible

We will be doing voter registration in conjunction with Christine Brown at KNDU. At this point we have the dates selected, but not the times or venues. The dates are July 7th (coming right up), August 27th, and September 25th. If any of you can help on those dates, let me know and I will let you know where and when.

Voter registration does not mean a person will vote, but they certainly can't unless they are registered, so please help if you possibly can. Thank you, Ginger

Good wine, great views, excellent company, and an interesting guest speaker characterized this year's June Table Talk/ Spring Social. Thanks to all involved in the planning.

Marilyn Perkins and Alice Bryant and the view.



Musings from the Editor, by Dea (An irregular feature)

As editor I may at times write about articles that I have read, events in the news, or other things that I feel may be of interest to the membership.

In *The Anti-Intellectual Presidency* Elvin Lim argues that the American electorate has become so preoccupied in its search for a "Great Communicator" that it no longer takes presidents to task for what they communicate. This is an alarming trend. Although, I have not read his book I have read excerpts, several reviews and intend to read it in its entirety in the future.

In his work Lim examines two centuries of presidential speeches to demonstrate an ever-increasing simplification of presidential rhetoric. In his research he applied the Flesch readability scale to the Inaugural and State of the Union Addresses of the presidents from George Washington to George W. Bush. He found that in the eighteenth and nineteenth century the readability level of these speeches was at the college level as compared to the current eighth grade level. The average number of words per sentence during the timeframe studied has decreased from sixty to twenty.


Lim concluded through a series of interviews with former presidential speechwriters, that the anti-intellectual drift within the speeches was a deliberate choice rather than a reflection of presidents' intellectual limitations. Even if the choice to "dumb down" their speeches might be no more nefarious than a desire by the presidents to be more democratic I fear that not only has the language of the speeches been simplified but also the content of the speeches. This I find alarming as it underestimates the capacity of the voters to deal with complex issues.

Roderick Hart, of the University of Texas wrote in his review of Lim's book, "Elvin Lim argues convincingly that politics has been dumbed-down but that enlightened civic conversation is possible if politicians will only try. Lim also believes that the American people want to be stretched intellectually and emotionally. The dark trail he traces therefore ends in a sunburst of hope that I find heartening" I believe the League has the capacity to be a large part of that sunburst .

The grade level of the above article on the Flesch Kincaid Scale is 14.4. There are 26.1 words per sentence. MS Word runs this test.

Courthouse Update: by Kathy Utz. Fred Staples continues to collect signatures for the ballot issue concerning the location of the seat of Benton County Government. He is particularly counting on the Fair Booth which will be available to him in August. I am hoping that everyone will be thinking of how we can help as a League both before and at the Fair. I will be gone until the middle of July, but upon return, I will have more time available to apply to this campaign. If you have copies of the petition, or need more, let me know before Thursday. I encourage you to work your neighborhood for signatures. My phone number is 375-1852. My address is 2320 Benton Avenue.

LEAGUE CALENDAR : Jun, July, August



Voter Registration	July 8th., August 28th, September 25th
League Sponsored Debate	July 22nd
Board Retreat	July 24th 5:30
Primary Election	August 19th
Women's Suffrage Celebration Howard Amon North Pavilion	August 28th 5:00 PM